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State Dept. review completed

8 March 1954

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LEFTIST COALITION DEFEATS CONGRESS PARTY IN
TRAVANCORE-COCHIN, SOUTH INDIAN STATE

I. Current Situation

A. Socialist-Communist electoral coalition won bare majority

(60 of 118 seats) in late February to Travancore-Cochin

state assembly, first Indian provincial elections since

1951-52.

B. Congress still largest single party in assembly with 46 seats.

II. Communists may enter Indian state government

A. This may be first opportunity for Communists to participate
in forming state government in India.

B. New Delhi embassy reliably told local Socialist leader wants
form government with Communist and other leftist support,
regardless of price Communists may ask. No indication yet
of extent Communist demands.

C. Prospect for so doing depends now on attitudes of Socialist
leaders on national level, some of whom vigorously oppose

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- D. If Socialist-Communist government formed, could govern as caretaker for six months with assembly dissolved even if later outvoted.
- E. This period believed long enough for effective Communist infiltration with serious damage internal security.

III. Outlook for continuing instability under any conditions

- A. Congress might invoke "president's" rule by central government New Delhi -- this device adopted or threatened by Nehru in other cases to thwart Communists. (e.g., PEPSU and Andhra).
- B. Present Congress attitude reportedly is play for time in hope split among leftists.

IV. Over-all significance elections is popular disillusionment on a local level with Congress Party, which still appears to offer India only chance for longer range stability.

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LEFTIST COALITION DEFEATS CONGRESS PARTY IN
TRAVANCORE-COCHIN, SOUTH INDIAN STATE

BACKGROUND

1. Travancore-Cochin's 9,265,000 people have highest literacy rate (50% plus) in India; electorate reputedly most enlightened.
2. But also most densely populated Indian state and shares general lack of development in South India. Vice President Nixon on 1953 trip noted many educated Travancore driving taxis, other menial jobs.
3. Along with neighboring state of Andhra, T-C has been a major area of Communist strength.
4. Communalism also strong; Congress Party opposition to linguistic separation in own ranks has antagonized groups like Tamil Nad Congress, which supports Nehru in principle. Creation of Andhra last September as linguistic state added strength this movement, and Communists have catered to it.

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5. Breakdown of seats in T-C assembly by party:

Congress Party..... 46

Travancore Tamil Nad Congress..... 12

Leftist Coalition:

Communist Party of India..... 23

Praja Socialist Party..... 19

Revolutionary Socialist Party..... 9

Kerala Socialist Party..... 3

Independents (Leftist-supported)..... 6

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